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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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TO AMEMBASSY BONN
SECSTATE WASHDC 6376
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USBERLIN 0525

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PGOV, BQG
SUBJECT: GERMAN REQUEST FOR TOUGHENED REPLY TO SOVIET DEMARCHES
RE FRG ACTIVITIES IN VIOLATION OF THE QUADRIPARTITE
AGREEMENT (QA)

REF: BONN 3890

SUMMARY. WE TAKE THE FRG REQUEST THAT ALLIES REBUT THE SOVIET DEMARCHES ON THE QUESTION OF THE FORMULA THAT WHAT IS NOT PERMITTED IS PROHIBITED TO BE A SIGN OF GROWING FRG SENSITIVITY ABOUT ATTACKS ON ITS ACTIVITIES IN BERLIN. THERE HAVE BEEN OTHER INDICATIONS, INCLUDING STOBBE'S SNAPPY REPLY TO ABRASIMOV, THAT THE GERMANS NOW WANT TO "TALK BACK" MUCH MORE FIRMLY ON THIS ISSUE. WE ARE SYMPATHETIC TO THIS NEED, WHICH RESPONDS TO WHAT THE GERMANS, OPPOSITION AND GOVERNMENT, PERCEIVE AS A GROWING PROPAGANDA ADVANTAGE OF THE EASTERN SIDE. AT THE SAME
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TIME WE AGREE WITH THE EMBASSY THAT AN ALLIED STATEMENT SHOULD NOT BE MADE TOO CATEGORICAL. THE PRINCIPLE DOES NOT HAVE TO BE BALDLY AFFIRMED, SINCE IT IMPLICITLY UNDERLIES ALL OUR EXCHANGES, I.E., THE RUSSIANS COMPLAIN BECAUSE FRG ACTIVITIES ARE NOT SPECIFIC-ALLY PERMITTED BY THE QA, AND WE DEFEND THEM BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT SPECIFICALLY FORBIDDEN. END SUMMARY.

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1. ALTHOUGH SURFACE MANIFESTATIONS ARE STILL OBSCURE,
THERE IS UNDOUBTEDLY SOME BUILDUP IN JUMPINESS ABOUT BERLIN
WITHIN THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT. ONE SIGN OF THIS IS THE
INITIATIVE OF VON VRAUNMUEHL TO GAIN A HARD ALLIED STATE-
MENT THAT ACTIVITIES NOT PROHIBITED BY THE QA ARE PERMITTED.
THE NERVOUSNESS SEEMS TO ARISE FROM THE COINCIDENCE OF TWO
DEVELOPMENTS WHICH MAY HAVE UNRELATED ORIGINS, I.E., WHAT
SOME ELEMENTS, PARTICULARLY THE OPPOSITION AND SOME OF THE
PRESS AND PUBLIC PERCEIVE AS A HARDENING OF SOVIET/GDR
POLICY ON BERLIN, AND SEPARATELY, SEVERAL MONTHS OF
TOUGHENED GDR TACTICS ON CIVIL ACCESS AND VISITS.

2. BOTH FACTORS BLEND UNDER THE RUBRIC OF EASTERN POLICY,
BUT THE FIRST AFFECTS SOVIET RELATIONS AND WE JUDGE
IT TO BE OF GREATER CONCERN TO THE FOREIGN OFFICE, WHEREAS
THE SECOND IS IN THE REALM OF ALL-GERMAN POLICY, AND MAINLY
INVOLVES THE CHANCELLERY-CENTERED GROUP OF SPD DECISION
MAKERS. LAYMEN TEND TO LINK THE EVENTS.

3. TO TAKE THE SECOND ITEM FIRST, THE GDR ACCESS/VISIT
TACTICS PRESUMABLY AROSE FROM CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT EX-
FILTRATION, AND MAYBE ABOUT PAUSCHAL FRG MONEY PAYMENTS
ON ACCESS. THE WISCHNEWSKI VISIT AND PERSUASIVE FRG
MOVES AGAINST COMMERCIAL EXFILTRATORS BROUGHT THINGS BACK
TO NORMAL IN FEBRUARY, BUT AT SOME COST. WISCHNEWSKI'S
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VISIT, ALTHOUGH SUCCESSFUL, AROUSED RESENTMENTS AS A
TRIP TO CANOSSA AND ADDED TO SUSPICIONS ABOUT SPD MOTIVES
WHICH EMERGED DURING THE GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO DOWNPLAY
THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SPIEGEL MANIFESTO. IT ALSO LED
TO SQUABBLES BETWEEN GAUS AND WISCHNEWSKI, WITH INSPIRED
STORIES ABOUT WISCHNEWSKI'S DRUNKENNESS IN EAST BERLIN
AND GAUS' IMMINENT REPLACEMENT. WE WONDER WHAT THIS DOES
TO THE WORK OF THE "GROUP OF FIVE" (WISCHNEWSKI, GAUS,
SPANGENBERG, KORBER AND VAN WELL) WHO DETERMINE INNER-GERMAN
POLICY. FURTHERMORE, THE ACCESS PROBLEM RE-
ACTIVATED THE OLD CHARGES THAT THE FRG IS OVERPAYING THE
GDR, AND FAILING TO USE ITS ECONOMIC LEVERAGE TO
WESTERN ADVANTAGE.

4. THE SOVIET DEVELOPMENT IS SEPARATE, AND SEEMS BASED ON
A FEELING THAT SOVIET PRESSURE IS GROWING AGAINST FRG/EEC
TIES TO BERLIN. WE CONSIDER THIS VIEW OVERSIMPLIFIED AS
TO SUBSTANCE OF SOVIET POLICY, BUT IT IS UNDERSTANDABLE
GIVEN THE RECENT DOCUMENTARY OF MOSTLY UNREBUTTED EASTERN
PROTESTS AGAINST THE FRG, PUBLICITY ABOUT SOVIET

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 USBERLIN 0525

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PATROLS, AND SOME EFFORTS TO ENHANCE THE GDR ROLE
IN BERLIN. FRG SUSPICIONS WILL BE FORTIFIED BXY A CATA-
LOGUE DEMARCHE MADE TO THE FRENCH BY SOVIET MINISTER
KHOTULEV ON MARCH 6 (NOT YET REPORTED), IN WHICH HE
PROTESTS IN DETAIL AGAINST EXTENSION TO BERLIN OF
FIVE SEPARATE FRG LAWS OR TREATIES.

5. GERMAN SENSITIVITY ABOUT THE COMMUNIST THESIS THAT
WHAT THE QA DOES NOT IDENTIFY AS PERMITTED IS PROBHIBITED MAY
PARTIALLY RELATE TO THE GDR ARTICLE IN THE DECEMBER
DEUTSCHE AUSSENPOLITIK, WHICH SPECIFICALLY MADE THIS POINT.
THE ARTICLE, TOGETHER WITH THE APPEARANCE OF THE "DOCU-
MENTARY," IS ANOTHER ATTEMPT TO PRESENT THE GDR AS HAVING
RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE QA.

6. THESE DEVELOPMENTS UNDOUBTEDLY HAVE IMPRESSED VARIOUS
MINISTRIES (PARA 16 REFTEL), AND THE OPPOSITION AS WELL.
INDEED, WE HAVE BEEN STRUCK BY INCREASING CDU/CSU PESSI-
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MISM ABOUT THE QA. THE LOCAL CDU, TO OUR MYSTIFICATION,

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INSISTS ON SAYING THAT THE QA IS FAILING BECAUSE OF THE RE-
PEATED SOVIET PROTESTS AGAINST FRG ACTIVITIES. AND THE
CDU AND CSU PUBLISHED ON FEBRUARY 24/25 TWO SOMBER PLATFORMS ON
EASTERN POLICY WHICH (NOT SURPRISINGLY) DESCRIBE PRESENT
POLICY AS BANKRUPT. EVEN EBULLIENT MAYOR STOBBE ON
MARCH 4 CHARACTERIZED INNER-GERMAN AND BERLIN POLICY TO
THE PRESS AS IN A "STATE OF SUSPENSE." THE FONOFF IS PROBABLY
ALSO DEPRESSED BY INCREASED FRENCH/UK MUSHINESS ON THE ISSUE
OF TIES.

7. CONNECTED WITH THE FOREGOING THERE SEEMS TO BE AN IN-
CREASED GERMAN DESIRE FOR ASSERTIVENESS ON THE
ISSUE OF FRG TIES. THERE HAVE RECENTLY OCCURRED SEVERAL
UNUSUAL VISITS TO BERLIN OF LUECKING AND VAN WELL, THE
LATTER TWICE IN TWO WEEKS. LUECKING'S VISIT WAS REPORTED
IN FSO SEMLER'S LETTER OF FEBRUARY 27 TO SMYSER AND WOESSNER.
WE JUDGE THAT THE NEW FRG "HARD LINE" ON TIES IS REFLECTED IN
STOBBE'S COMMENTS TO ABRASIMOV (USBERLIN 474).

8. WE AGREE WITH THE EMBASSY THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER
TO AVOID A CATEGORICAL STATEMENT ON THE SUBJECT,
AND THAT A LIGHTER REJECTION OF "IMPLICATIONS" WOULD BE
PREFERABLE. WE DO NOT NEED TO GENERALIZE A PRINCIPLE WHICH
IS ANYWAY IMPLICIT IN OUR REPLIES. WHENEVER THE SOVIETS
PROTEST FRG ACTIVITIES AS ILLEGAL BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT
SPECIFICALLY PERMITTED IN THE QA, WE RESPOND THAT THEY ARE
LEGAL BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT SPECIFICALLY PROHIBITED. THE
BASIC PROBLEM, HOWEVER, IS NOT WHAT FORMULAE WE USE TO
REFUTE SOVIET ARGUMENTS, BUT THE FACT THAT WE REFUTE THEM
AND THAT PEOPLE KNOW OF THIS. THE SOVIET PUBLICATION OF
SO MANY PRESUMABLY UNANSWERED PROTESTS HAS GIVEN THEM A
CERTAIN PROPAGANDA ADVANTAGE, AND TO MEET THIS WE MAY HAVE
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TO CONSIDER RESORTING TO SOME APPROPRIATE PUBLICITY OF
OUR OWN. GEORGE

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